

April in South-East Minnesota at a Christian Hermitage on a Buddhist Retreat

In front of me is a twelve by nine-foot picture window overlooking snow, melty trees, and a lake. The sun is sun-shiney. The sky would look exactly like a fire engine if a fire engine looked exactly unlike itself or like nothing at all, exactly.

I have this cabin to myself, nearly surrounded by woods, and no one can see in, I don't think. But I can look out all I want. As far as that goes.

Inside, there's a funny gold-toned crucifix by its lonesome on the wall. Jesus has enormous blank eyes, and all the tiny people gathered around him have enormous blank eyes. I'm not sure what the artist was going for.

Outside, drops of water are falling off the trees from a long way up. It takes every single drop a long, silvery, kamikaze dive to get down off its tree. I mean they're coming down all over. From where I'm sitting, it's basically raining from an immaculate sky. It's a miracle.

And yet the horizontal beam of the cross will intersect the vertical beam of the cross, and we can never finally decide if we're animal or divine--or both, and what is that? Inexplicable blankety blank. Sign here on the blank. Just so totally blanked up...

Oh my god, I think he's smiling! Ever so slightly. Even wryly. Oh my god, people, I made Jesus crack up!

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It's later now and the sun's going down. So my picture window channel is basically changing every nanosecond at least. It's almost too much entertainment. The horizon, the horizon on fire, the horizon imagining the horizon on fire, till at last it can't imagine itself whatsoever, much less fire. Too pure. Too far. Too God.

When I get back from this retreat, they'll say my attention span has been damaged, I've become an addicted millennial. Soon I'll be crying for Picture Window II, then III with a camera and touch window, then IV with GPS and digital Windex. But it hasn't, I'm not, and I won't. We're talking changes every nanosecond, people. We're talking vanishing point. Nature so far ahead and so much faster than human, it's still. Almost running backwards in fact.

Soon we'll be competing for downgrades. We won't be able to downgrade fast enough. Eight-tracks, gramophones, messages by horse. Moments of focus. Soon the most primitive tools from Amazon and Apple: rocks, sticks.

Claws.

Fins.

A single cell thing.
Something with an idea.
About itself.